

Evaluation report: GEO-SD308: Policy Design and Implementation, spring 2021

1. Information about the course

Course: <https://www.uib.no/en/course/GEO-SD308>

Semester: Spring 2021
Course coordinator: Pål Davidsen

Teacher: David Wheat

Forms of assessment: Assessment consists of evaluating a modeling project. The modeling project consists of a simulation model (70% of the final grade), a report (15% of the final grade) and a video-recorded oral presentation (15% of the final grade)

Teaching methods: distance learning course delivered online using digital technologies and facilitated by an on-site teaching assistant. It consists of live-streamed, recorded and stored lectures with active participation by students, computer modeling assignments, in-class 'thought experiments', and case studies requiring a model-based policy analysis, an interactive learning environment, and a presentation.

2. Statistics

Signed up for exam:30

Grade distribution

A=20

B=10

3. Self-evaluation

Assessment of the teaching program in relation to the objectives and results

- A. What did you focus on in the teaching plan? Give a short description of the teaching plan in the course, with emphasis on what was new this time.

The basic teaching plan was to divide the lectures between policy modeling principles (2 lectures) and case study applications (7 lectures), and one lecture period reserved questions arising during the final week of preparing the course project for submission. We (Alililu and I) used this specific plan for the first time in 2020, and this year we used a few new case studies that we thought would better illustrate the principles. Also, this year I provided more suggestions for structuring the labs (conducted by Will) than in the past, so that the students would be practicing what had been discussed in the previous week's lectures and/or preparing themselves for the upcoming lectures.

- B. What is your opinion of how well the teaching plan worked? Give a brief description of any evaluations that have been made and give an assessment of the experiences with this year's teaching plan.

More important than my opinion are the opinions of the students. Yet it is always problematic to 'evaluate evaluations by others.' The aggregate course evaluation results are encouraging—the overwhelming majority of students give the course high marks. Managing by exception, however, requires that an instructor pay close attention to the complaints, especially if they contain expressions of "I wish the course had ..." that resonate with the instructor's own teaching goals. And I think the complaints—which seem to come from a small number of articulate students who

used each opportunity in the survey to repeat in slightly different ways what improvements they would like to see—are valid: better, more detailed examples of policy implementation. Each year, our selection of case studies will be reviewed with that learning goal in mind, and we hope to improve in that area. I should underscore, however, that a key take-away from our implementation modeling course is that a policy model will always contain some wishful thinking links at the end of the day. It's not practical to try to model everything—there comes a time to stop modeling and resume talking about the implementation challenges that remain. That is understandably frustrating for technically-proficient students who have little patience for the politics of policy implementation (i.e., the conflict and the resolution methods that result in outcomes that no policy-maker would have preferred).

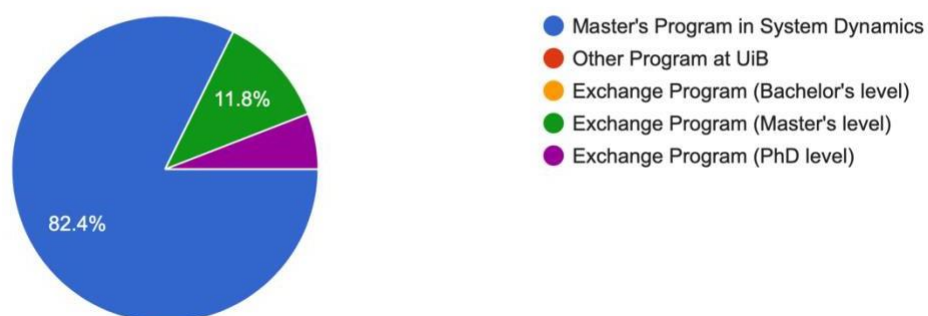
- C. What adjustments will you recommend for the next time the course is offered? Give a brief assessment of which parts of the teaching plan should be continued and what, if any, should be changed.

As stated above, selection and discussion of next year's case studies will be based on a desire to improve the implementation 'lessons learned'. Both the guest lecturer and I can make improvements along those lines, I'm sure. Yet, I still have confidence in the course structure: introductory lectures on policy design principles and historical examples of failed-implementation followed by several cases studies, and that basic teaching plan is not likely to change.

4. GEO SD 308 Course Evaluation Results (Spring 2021)

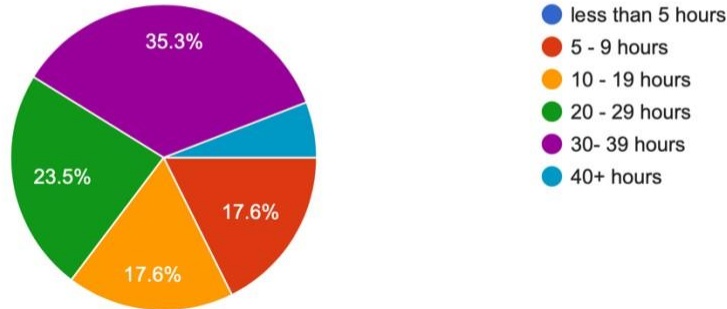
I study GEO-SD 308 as part of:

17 responses



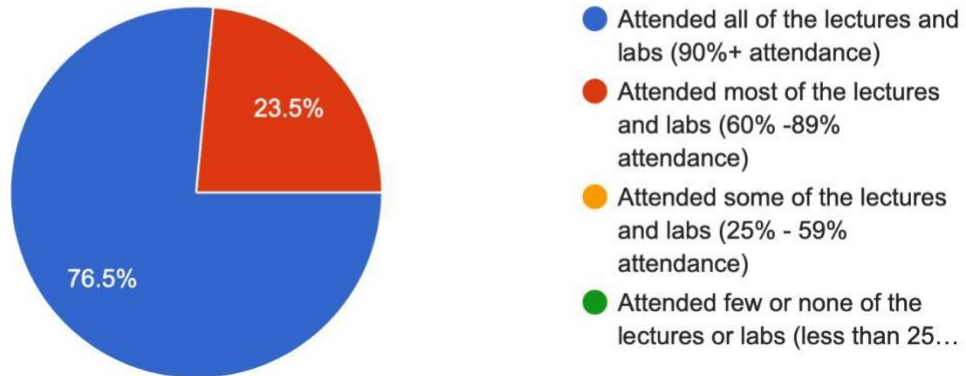
How many hours per week on average did you spend on this course? (include all time spent studying, doing homework, attending lectures and labs, etc.)

17 responses



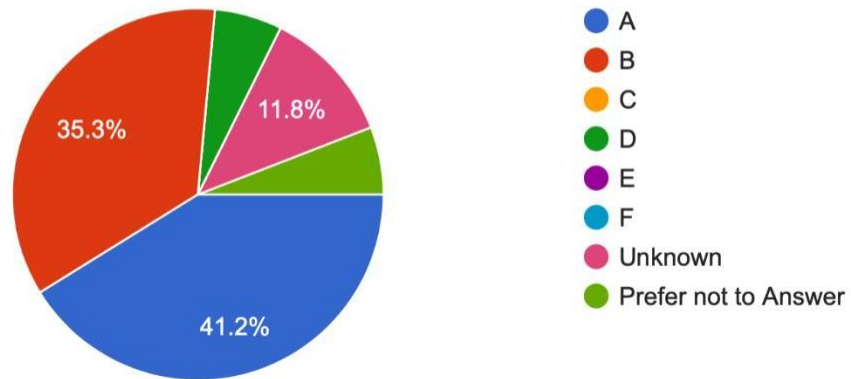
To what extent did you participate in the lectures/labs?

17 responses

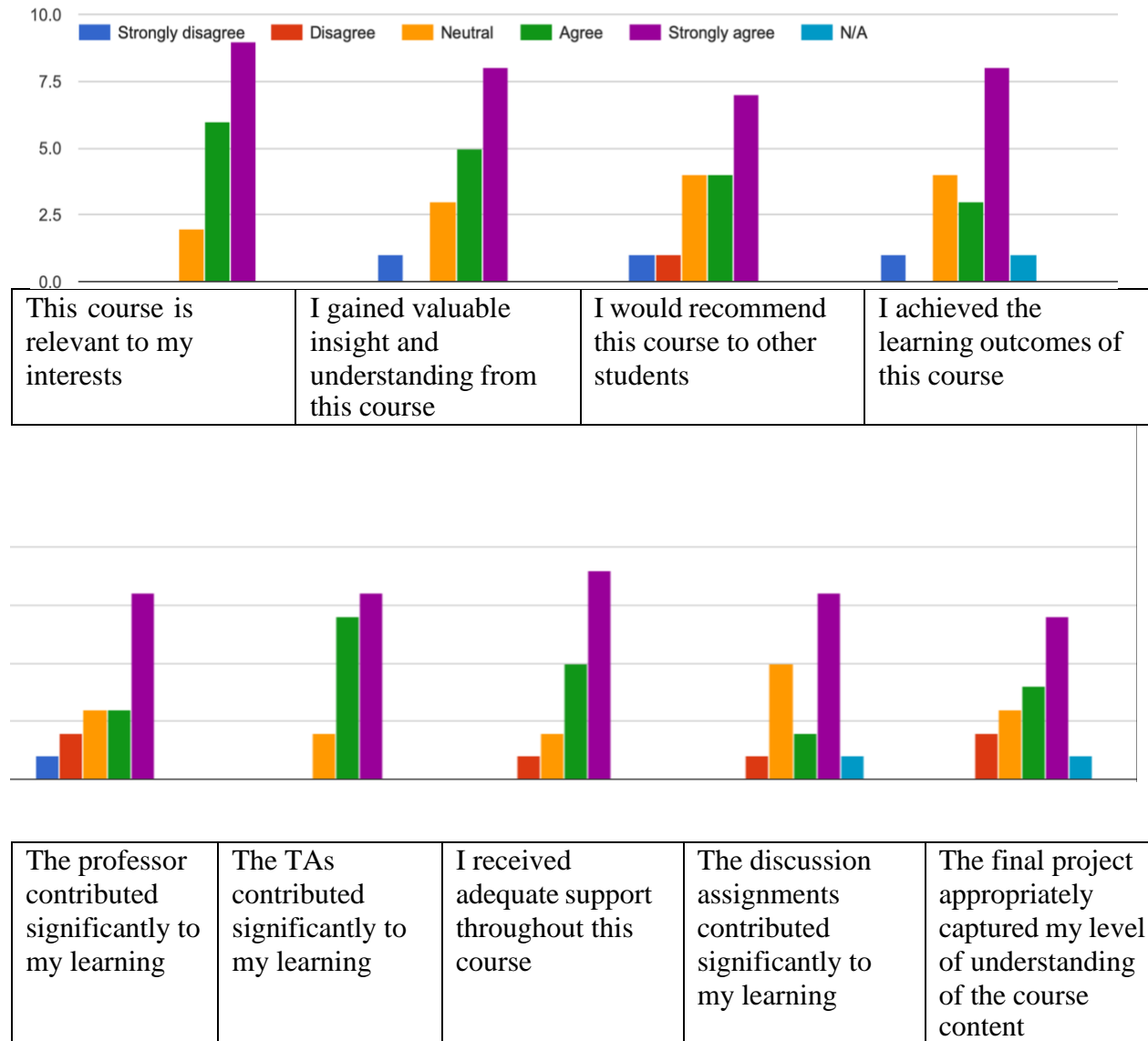


What grade do you expect to get in this course:

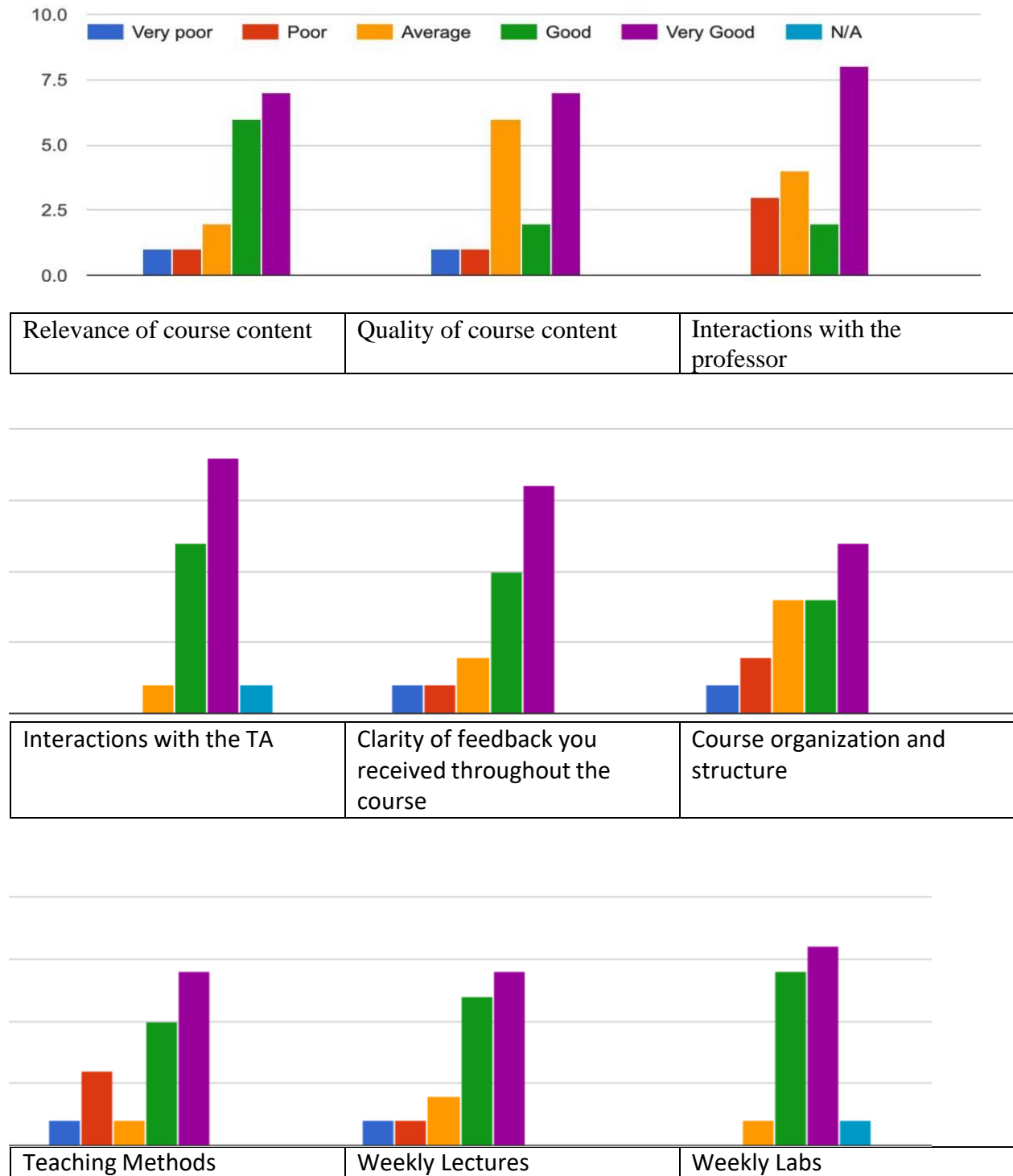
17 responses



Please mark how you feel about each of the statements listed below:

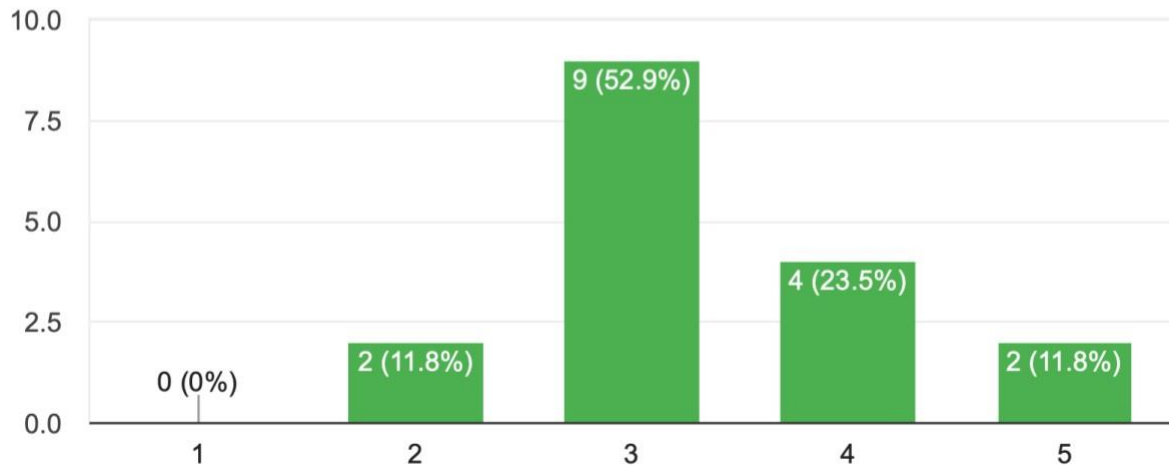


How do you assess different parts of the course:



To what extent did the 'distance learning' style of this course affect your experience with the course and...y to achieve the learning outcomes?

17 responses



5. Follow-up

Comments on previous evaluations (if any)

I'm sure I made comments on previous-year evaluations and I have nothing to add to those earlier comments.

How do plan to follow-up on the basis of the course report

I responded to question 3 above after reading the entire student evaluation. Thus, I have already provided an answer regarding 'follow-up' in #3(b) and (c) above

